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**THE SPRING AWAKENING OF THE FLEET.** The Gloucester fishing fleet is having its annual spring awakening and the next few weeks, as far forth as fitting out and changing over voyages, will be the busiest of the year.

The latter part of February and month of March is practically the beginning of a new year for the fishing fleet of this port. It is then that the vessels make ready for the fishing that will employ them all the year until next winter. Crafts that have been hauled up all winter are overhauled, painted, and put in the best of shape and made ready for business. Others that have been haddocking are hauled out and fitted for other lines. The salt bank, Georges halibuting, Rips and other fleets are thus formed and by the middle of March or first of April, all are away on their respective voyages.

This season of fitting out is a busy one. Everything takes on new life. Owners, skippers and crews are busy, riggers and sail-makers have their hands full and longshoremen have but few idle moments. Big crafts laden with salt come from across the ocean, and their cargoes find their ways into the holds of vessels and warehouses. Topmasts spring up everywhere, paint and varnish and tar are on all sides and everything is hustle and bustle.

It is at this time of the year that Gloucester sets forth on her annual venture, the spring, summer and fall fisheries. Full of hope her men go at it, all from owner to hand optimistic and hoping for success. Failure is not thought of, but all look ahead with confidence to success in the undertakings.

The big salt bankers, the big backbone of the fleet, are now sailing daily, and the Georgesmen and Georges halibuters and Bank halibuters are rounding Eastern Point as fast as they can be made ready. The seining skippers are looking over the seines and boats and having them put in order, and but a few weeks now will see the yachtlike craft spread their sails for the waters of the south, there to pursue the elusive mackerel.

Soon the Rips fleet will be getting away and then the winter haddock fleet, then pretty well thinned in ranks, will provide crafts for the shack fishery, while a few will still continue to fish for the market. The little mackerel netters will be next in line and with their large gangs of nets will sail for the south, where their big seining brothers have gone ahead of them in search of mackerel, and then the season will be fairly on.

It means much, this fitting out season does to Gloucester. Success may come from it or failure, but come what may, Gloucester awaits it with equanimity. She knows from the experience of nearly three centuries of years that all will not show a balance on the right side of the ledger in the fall, still she hopes for the best and is not cast down because a few ventures fail, while the majority succeed. She takes one year with the other and awaits the result.

She knows that some of the staunch craft may never return, that some of the hardy fellows, who sing and whistle as they fit out, may never come back to tread her streets. She knows that gales will come and the ice fields will be met by some and that crafts will be damaged, yet year after year she goes on, fitting out her fleet to cruise from Hatteras to Greenland, always hoping for the best and always realizing that the worst may occur. Courage and faith the men and women of Gloucester need and courage and faith they have and have always had, else the fisheries of the port would years ago have been but a name and a memory.

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#### QUEER HAUL.

##### Eight Cucumber Fish Brought in by Trawler Spray.

Eight cucumber fish, a great rarity on this coast and seldom seen at Boston were hauled up in the net of the otter trawler Spray on her recent trip and were preserved alive and on board. An agent of the New York aquarium viewed the odd fish and they may be sent to that city. The fish are about eight inches long and two inches in diameter, a perfect reproduction of a large green cucumber. The fish expands until a sort of fan tail appears at one end.

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#### Porto Rico Fish Market.

From Porto Rico, S. Ramirez & Co. of San Juan, report February 7: "Our last advices were dated January 30, since when the only arrivals of fishstuffs were some 100 casks dry fish ex City of Savannah from New York. The demand continues fairly good, but prices remain rather stationary, it proving very difficult to advance values ever so little. We quote as follows net ex wharf: Medium codfish, \$6 to \$6.25; haddock, \$4.75 to \$5; (quite neglected): pollock, \$4.25 to \$4.50; hake, \$2.50 to \$2.75 (quite neglected); split herring, \$5.75 to \$6 per bbl.; smoked herring, 13 1-2 cents per box.

Feb. 21

#### Good Stock.

Sch. Catherine G. Howard, Capt. William Doyle, stocked \$2200 as the result of her recent fresh codfishing trip to the Grand Bank.

#### DAILY TIMES FISH BUREAU.

##### To-day's Arrivals and Receipts.

Sch. Francis J. O'Hara, via Boston, 50,000 lbs. fresh fish.  
Sch. Mary E. Cooney, via Boston.  
Sch. Belbina P. Domingoes, via Boston.

##### Today's Fish Market.

These prices are based on the last known sales.

Salt handline Georges codfish, \$5.25 per cwt. for large, \$4.25 for medium.  
Salt trawl Georges codfish, \$4.75 for large, 3.75 for medium.  
Salt hake, \$1.00.  
Salt haddock, \$1.10.  
Salt cusk, \$2.25.  
Salt trawl bank codfish, \$3.50 for large, \$3.00 for medium.  
Newfoundland frozen herring for bait, \$3.00 per cwt.  
Shore frozen herring, for bait, \$2.50 per cwt.  
Fresh halibut, 10 cents per lb. for white and 6 1-2 cts. for gray.  
Splitting prices of fresh fish: Large Eastern cod, \$1.87 1-2; medium do., \$1.37 1-2; large Western cod, \$2.12 1-2; medium do., \$1.50; haddock, 85 cts.; cusk, \$1.25; hake, 80 cts.; pollock, 65 cts.

##### Boston.

Sch. Flora S. Nickerson, 9000 haddock, 5000 cod.  
Sch. Massasoit, 19,000 cod.  
Sch. M. Madeleine, 500 haddock, 22,000 cod, 500 pollock.  
Sch. Beulah Maud, 2000 cod.  
Sch. Frances V. Silva, 11,000 haddock, 3000 cod.  
Sch. Mary Edith, 6000 haddock, 7000 cod, 2000 hake.  
Sch. Mary Cabral, 9000 haddock, 500 cod.  
Sch. Rose Dorothea, 15,000 haddock, 2000 cod.  
Sch. Valentina, 1000 haddock, 25,000 cod.  
Sch. Seaconnet, 21,000 haddock, 2500 cod, 1000 hake.  
Haddock, \$1.50 to \$2; large cod, \$2.70 to \$3; market cod, \$1.25 to \$1.50.

##### Fishing Fleet Movements.

Capt. Vincent Nelson is here to fit sch. Senator Gardner for salt banking.

Capt. Wilson Spinney will fit sch. American for salt banking in a few days.

Sch. Matthew Keany is being fitted for Georges handlining.

##### Provincetown Notes.

Monday of last week was a banner day for the small boats fishing in the bay, nearly all of which secured big hauls of fish which netted good pay even if the price was not at the top notch.

One dory secured 52,000 pounds of fish from one barrel of herring the past week.

The storm of last Friday, February 9, was quite severe for a few hours, but luckily no serious damage resulted along the harbor front. Among the mishaps resulting from the storm were the breaking adrift of John D. Silva's sloop from her moorings and as the craft drifted down alongside of R. R. wharf, she broke bowsprit and mainboom and damaged side. Joseph Roberts and Joseph Cabral succeeded in getting aboard the sloop and after starting the gasoline engine the craft was worked away from the wharf and tied up under the lee of J. D. Hilliard's wharf. Sch. William Walker also broke away from Bangs' wharf and started leaking. The sloop owned by John O'Neil broke away from wharf and broke mainboom and filled with water.

Capt. Eli McKay, whose illness was previously noted, died at his home February 8 and was buried the following Sunday.